

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-05 ACDA-07 /072 W
-----041966 202153Z /70

R 201458Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1255
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO
USNMR SHAPE

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NL
SUBJ: DUTCH COMMUNIST PARTY

1. SUMMARY: RECENT REACTION OF DUTCH CPN TO DRASTIC ELECTION LOSSES THIS SPRING PROVIDES INTERESTING CONTRAST TO THE FACE COMMUNIST PARTIES ARE SHOWING ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE. END SUMMARY

2. THE DUTCH COMMUNIST PARTY (CPN) FOLLOWED AN INDEPENDENT COURSE BETWEEN MOSCOW AND PEKING DURING A DECADE WHEN OTHER EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES WERE MANEUVERING CLOSER TO ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE TWO COMMUNIST CAPITALS. BETWEEN 1964-75 THE CPN EVEN DID NOT ATTEND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY CONFERENCES SUDDENLY IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR CPN LEADERS JOURNEYED TO MOSCOW AND RETURNED TO HOLLAND WITH THE NEWS THAT THE CPN AND CPSU

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SAW EYE-TO-EYE ALONG MAJOR POLICY LINES.

3. THE CPN LOST BADLY IN THE MAY NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN HOLLAND, FALLING FROM SEVEN PARLIAMENTARY SEATS TO TWO. THE CPN SHARED THE FATE OF MOST SMALL PARTIES IN THE NETHERLANDS, MOST OF WHICH FELL VICTIM TO THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE THREE LARGE PARTIES: THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (CDA), THE LIBERALS (VVD) AND LABOR

(PVDA). THE CPN WAS HURT PARTICULARLY BY THE FACT THAT THE ELECTION WAS IN PART A PERSONALITY CONTEST BETWEEN SOCIALIST PRIME MINISTER DEN UYL (PVDA) AND CDA LEADER VAN AGT. THE CPN FOLLOWED A TACTIC OF ATTACKING VAN AGT, AND AS A RESULT SAW ITS ELECTORAL SUPPORTERS SWITCH IN LARGE NUMBERS TO THE LABOR PARTY AND DEN UYL.

4. AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF SILENCE, FORMER PARTY CHAIRMAN PAUL DE GROOT DELIVERED A SCATHING ATTACK ON THE PRESENT PARTY LEADERSHIP. THE ASSAULT, DIRECTED AGAINST PRESENT CPN CHAIRMAN HENK HOEKSTRA AND FLOOR LEADER MARCUS BAKKER, LAID DOWN A BARRAGE OF HARD-LINE COMMUNIST TERMINOLOGY REMINISCENT OF AN EARLIER AGE, INCLUDING ACCUSATIONS OF PASSIVITY IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND OF COVERT HOSTILITY TO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM. DE GROOT FURTHER ACCUSED THE PARTY EXECUTIVES OF DESIRING TO BE ACCEPTED BY THE BOURGEOISIE AND OF FAILURE TO TRAIN MILITANT CADRES. HOEKSTRA AND HIS SUPPORTERS, RATHER THAN COUNTER ATTACKING BY DEFENDING THE NEED TO APPEAL TO A BROADER BASE OF SUPPORT, LED THE "OLD GUARD" HAVE ITS SAY. HOEKSTRA EVEN AGREED ON SOME POINTS, PRIMARILY TO RECRUIT YOUNGER AND MORE MILITANT MEMBERS FROM THE WORKING CLASS AND TO FOREGO ATTEMPTS TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR AN ELECTORAL ALLIANCE WITH PARTIES HAVING STRONGER PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION SUCH AS THE PPR AND THE SOCIALISTS. THE HOEKSTRA-RUN CPN NEWSPAPER "DE WAARHEID" HAS, HOWEVER, NOT SOFTENED ITS LANGUAGE IN AN ATTEMPT TO ATTRACT IDEALISTICALLY MOTIVATED POTENTIAL MEMBERS.

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5. A RECENT MANIFESTATION OF CPN'S ORGANIZATIONAL THRUST HAS BEEN A SHARP COMPLAINT BY THE STRONG DUTCH SOCIALIST TRADE UNION ASSOCIATION NVV THAT THE CPN IS SEEKING TO CAST SUSPICION ON TRADE UNIONS IN AN ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE A POSITION AMONG INDUSTRIAL WORK FORCE. THE NVV CLAIMS THAT, SINCE LAST MAY'S GENERAL ELECTION LOSSES, THE COMMUNISTS HAD "DRASTICALLY CHANGED COURSE," ASSERTING THAT THE CPN HAS BEEN TOLD BY HOEKSTRA THAT IT MUST NO LONGER BE A "DECENT PARTY BUT AN ACTION PARTY."

6. COMMENT: IN THE WAKE OF DE GROOT'S ATTACK, THE CPN NOW SEEMS TO BE MOVING AGAIN TO AN INWARD-LOOKING, PRO-MOSCOW PARTY LINE. AT THE SAME TIME, AND IN THE FACE OF COMMUNISTS ATTEMPTS AT "RESPECTABILITY" ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE, THE CPN SEEMS TO HAVE REVERTED TO 1950'S IDEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS AND METHODS OF OPERATION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, PARTY LINE, COMMUNISTS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977THEHA04799
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770342-0308
Format: TEL
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770942/aaaabjav.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 37838741-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1201812
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DUTCH COMMUNIST PARTY
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/37838741-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009